

The 14th Assembly of the Conference of European Churches (CEC), Budapest, Hungary, 3–8 July 2013

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The 14th Assembly of CEC took place in Budapest, Hungary between 3–8 July 2013 under the theme “And now what are you waiting for? (Acts 22:16). CEC and its mission in a changing Europe.” The main task of this Assembly was to renew the Constitution of CEC, concluding a process of CEC restructuring which was initiated in the previous Assembly in Lyon, France, 2009. A draft constitution was discussed in the plenary of the Assembly paragraph by paragraph, delegates of all CEC member churches being able to propose amendments to the draft. This exercise caused a lot of difficult discussions and tensions but it was concluded by having a new CEC Constitution. This was an achievement celebrated by all delegates at the end of the Assembly.

A new governing board formed by 20 members has been elected, as well as a new President Bishop Christopher Hill (Church of England) seconded by two vice-presidents: H. E. Metropolitan Emmanuel of France (Ecumenical Patriarchate) and Very Revd. Karin Burstrand (Church of Sweden). The Romanian Orthodox Church is represented in the CEC governing board by H.E. Metropolitan Joseph of Paris and the Evangelical Church A. C. in Romania by Vic. Adriana Florea.

The final message of the Assembly underlines the economical and ecumenical challenges of Europe. People of Europe face a situation of despair and hopelessness because of the economic crisis which has reached the entire world. European Christians and churches are called to strengthen their efforts as brothers and sisters in Christ for seeking to promote together especially the voice of the most marginalized members of our society: migrants, youth, and different minorities.

The CEC Assembly in Budapest worked with three committees: Finance Committee, Nomination Committee, Policy Reference Committee and Public Issues Committee. The report of the Public Issues Committee made a statement on the different challenges faced by churches in Europe and beyond. The report starts with a statement of the financial and economic crisis in Europe, appealing to CEC member churches to be more involved in diaconal work and to call upon governments and European institutions to promote sustainable policies able to overcome the negative effects of the actual crisis. The next issues raised in the report were the situation of young